SELF KNOWLEDGE AND SELF REALISATION

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SELF KNOWLEDGE
&
SELF REALISATION

(ADAPTATION OF THE BOOK—
"आत्मज्ञान आणि परमात्मयोग")

By

Shree NISARGADATTA.

Adaptation by :

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Published by :—

Shree Ram Narayan Chavhan,
Shree Nisargadatta Ashram,
Vanmali Bhavan,
10th Khetwadi, Bombay 4.

Published on the 8th day of
April 1963, the 66th birthday of
Shree Sadguru Nisargadatta Maharaj

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Printed by :—

J. D. Desai
Rashtra Vaibhav Press,
273, Vithalbhai Patel Rd.,
Girgaon, Bombay 4.

FOREWORD

My preceptor Shree Sadguru Nisargadatta Maharaj, the Author of the present collection of homilies is a member of the spiritual lineage of the Navanathas. Shree Revananath, the last of the Navanathas' founded his own sect in the south with Kadsiddheshwar as his chosen disciples. The latter initiated Shree Gurulingajangama Maharaja along with other disciples into the spiritual secrets of his sect. Shree Bhausaheb Umadikar and Shree Rambhau Yeragattikar were the renouned disciples of Shree Gurulingajangam Maharaj. Inchegeri Sampradāya to which Nisargadatta Maharaj belongs was founded by Shree Sadguru Bhausaheb Maharaj the elder of the two disciples of Gurulingajangam Maharaja.

Introduction of Bhajan four times a day is mainly responsible for the healthy growth of this Sampradāya and it was done by the founder himself and it is scrupulously followed by all the devout followers of the Sampradāya. Prominent among the disciples of Shree Bhausaheb Maharaj were the late Dr. R. D. Ranade, Shree Amburao Maharaj, Shree Siddharameshwar Maharaja and Shree Siddhalingayya Swamy, Shree Girimalleshwar Maharaja of these, Shree Siddharameshwar Maharaj chose a few prominent places such as Bombay, Sholapur, Kolhapur etc. for the spread of 'Bhakti' and 'spiritual Knowledge' and was active from 1924 to the last moment of his life.

Shree Nisargadatta Maharaja is a disciple of Shree Siddharameshwar Maharaja. He was born on the auspicious day of Hanumana Jayanti in 1897 and was hence named Maruti. Since his childhood he was deeply interest-

ed in religious activities and philosophical literature. Visiting the temples of Gods and the observance of religious fasts and traditional rituals increased his thirst for the Vision of God. He was then a noted businessman in Bombay, but was not at all interested in the business. In a few years time he bade good bye to the business to utilise his time in the quest of the Ultimate. He approached the great saint Shree Siddharameshwar Maharaja and was intiated by him. On the advise of his preceptor he gave up his earlier practices of fasting and rituals. Within less than a years' time he was ripe for holding meetings for religious discourses. It was at Malavan, his native place that he made the beginning of his Life Mission.

After the demise of his preceptor, the intensity of the urge for self realisation reached its limit and he left for Pandharpur without giving thought even for a moment to what would happen to those that were dependent on him; and spent about six months in visiting various holy places in the North and South.

Shree Nisargadatta Maharaj has no patience with miracles. He is convinced that they are a positive hindrance to spiritual progress. He says "The aspirant should take his Pure Self as his preceptor and persue with sincerity and intense love". He further says "Your preceptor tells you that 'You are Pure Consciousness, and Pure Divinity'; believe in his word and proceed with your Sadhānā. You must see the Light. Be kind to all living beings. Do not hate nor envy anybody. Be straight and courteous in your behaviour. There is only one God and that is 'Self-Knowledge'. Two collections of his teachings super-saturated with spiritual knowledge are published in Marathi; the first one is 'Atmāgnyāna Āni Paramatmayoga' and is the basis of the present

English adaptation; the second" Ishwar Gnyāna Swarūpa Āni Sāt–Swarūpagñyana" was published in 1960.

People from different walks of life come to him for guidance. He does not recognise any distinctions of Caste and Religion. Portraits of great Saints of different religions find an honoured place in his sanctuary and are worshiped every day along with that of his own preceptor. He never accepts any gift from any one; nor does he allow any one to serve him. He says "I do not want any thing from you, on the contrary you can ask for any thing from me. You should give me all your vices and weaknesses, you should not take them back from here".

As stated above this book–let contains English adaptations of the book "Atmagnyāna and Paramatmayoga" which is widely read by all Marathi knowing people. In my discussions with a number of my friends and acquaintances who do not know Marathi I found that I myself could not explain these teachings either in Hindi or English. This, inability of mine prompted me to think of an English adaptations of the discourses. My friend Shree P. T. Phadole, Registrar Elphinstone College, Bombay, came to my help and introduced me to Prof. V. M. Kulkarni, who is a disciple of Gurudeva Dr. R. D. Ranade, Prof. Kulkarni on knowing my intention voluntarily undertook the work himself and has done it so well. I am very much greatful to him for the same.

The brochure is meant mainly for those who aspire to know something of the spiritual life. Howsoever extensive and detailed a book may be it can never be a substitute for a direct discussion with the enlightened person. I, therefore, pray that those who have any difficulties should get them clarified in person from my preceptor. He is easy to approach and will be delighted to discuss

spiritual matters with every one who desires to do so. He has reached the final goal of spiritual life and is forever free from the cycle of birth and death, and hence ageless; yet empirically he enters his 67th year on the 8th of April 1963. On this occassion I pray Him that we, his disciples be given the opportunity to serve him for many years to come.

Om-Tat-Sat.

Shree Nisargadatta Ashram
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10th Khetwadi Bombay-4.
8th April 1963

RAM NARAYAN CHAVAN.

APOLOGIA

The following lines are like bracket signs on the key-board of a type-writer. They mean nothing. One may tap them only if they serve the purpose. My only excuse for scribbling them here is that Shri Nisargadatta Maharaj bids me do so and I obey.

From the account of his spiritual progress recorded in the text, it is obivious that he is a mystic to be mentioned with respect. He has an easy access to all the four great yogas though he lays particular stress on the easiest of them viz. The Nāmajapa Yoga-as is clear from the last two paragraphs in the discourse on Gāyatri Chhanda. The final goal is the realization of the Identity of the individual soul with the Supreme Being. His sole interest as a saint lies in guiding men on the Path way to God. Undoubtedly, ignorance is the greatest hurdle that blocks the path of the common man to spiritual life, yet one cannot ignore the part played by physical sufferings in this respect. More often than not these sufferings are responsible for his indifference. Alleviation of pain and misery is as important as is the removal of ignorance.

There is nothing intrisically wrong with the Siddhis; and no Rajayogi has ever said that their use in the service of humanity would be an obstacle in the way of Self-Realisation. It would be, this humble scribe feels, an ideal combination of Raj Yoga and Karmāyoga. One would sincerely wish, Shri Nisargadatta Maharaja chose a few of his trusted disciples for this mission as the great saint Ramakrishna Paramhamsa had done in the case of Swami Vivekananda. May be, it is already in his own mission, as an item; and if so, it should receive the attention it deserves.

It is very rarely that such a queer, though humble, suggestion is put forth before a mystic. But it is a matter of bracket signs after all. They need not be made use of it out of time.

V. M. KULKARNI.

ABRIDGED PREFACE

(of the Original Marathi book)

I first came in contact with Shri Sadguru Nisargadatta Maharaja (his original name being Shri Marutirao Shivarama Kambli) at the fag end of the year 1933. We, all of us co-disciples, were singing our night prayers with our preceptor (Shri Siddharameshwar Maharaja), in the hall of one of our senior co-disciples Shri Krishnarao R. Pathare (Solicitor) at Gamdevi; and we used to meet later on as co-disciples. But I came in intimate contact with him only at the begining of 1941. I take it to be a great favour of Shri Sadguru Siddharameshwar Maharaja that I was blesssd by the company of an enlightened soul to guide me at the highest level in my spiritual pursuit after his departure (only physical, of course). In recognition of this favour whatever I say is a heart felt expression inspired by the Guru himself; and it is his nector sweet voice, not mine. I venture to write this preface only to honour the loving insistance of the disciples of Shri Nisargadatta Maharaja. A preface to a book like the present one is not the proper place to dwell on the personal relations at length. Hence, it is better to resist the temptation to go ahead with it.

This book begins with the discourse on the Great Principle. "There should one enter into discussion", says Ramdas "Where a satisfactory end can be visualised; and this can best be interpreted as that alone should be discussed which is the root cause of all discussions and where all discussions come to an end. "The apperception of the "I" in one's own being is the consummation of all knowledge, while the perception of the "Ego" there is the greatest calamity" (Yoga Vāsishtha). The realisation of

not "I" but 'Thou' O, God is the veritable salvation; The assertion of the 'ego' is the root cause of all suffering. This basic fact has been exquisitely explained in a number of discourses in the present book. Though no references have been quoted in support of the arguments and statements in point, a sympathetic and wise reader will certainly be reminded of different works and sayings of great saints while reading.

Though the language of some of the discourses such as 'The Lilā of God' 'the Unitive Life', Gayatri hymn' and etc. is not within the easy grasp of the common man, the rhythem in itself is enough to hold him spell bound; (and in course of time he is sure to grasp the sense as well) for 'The language may change, but the meaning is not lost; what matters above all is the meaning itself' (Dasabodha).

The conviction that "I am not the body and hence am not like it; I am the soul, am the Brahman" is the very basis of spiritual life. In social interaction when angry, a one warns the other 'Not a word about me, mind you; I am not what I look'. Similarly as the saying goes there is no remedy to change one's nature. This and other similar proverbs have come from the mouth of the learned people. Here 'nature' stands for the core of the conscious principle, the eternal supreme soul and its sacred power. If the supreme soul be eternal, how can its power be evanescent? This energy plays the game of cosmic display for a while and disappears only to emerge again. This its rhythemic process goes on forever. That energy that duration (in the Bergsonian sense) is also called the feet of the saints. This duration is immeasurable. For the sun rise, the very measurement thereof, is not there at all. Still this experience (Anu Bhava i. e. The atom has 'become' This world) is not always to be

had in its pure form and is, hence, to be called Māyā. As in the waking state so too in deep sleep the soul experiences a world sin-generis; and what are its constituents? The Universal soul, the atom of atoms becomes active and shines forth as surrounded by the universe. Its first ray of light is the ether and the rest is pumped hard into it. The saint is always aware of this fact and hence is cautious in his behaviour. "In the dreams, we feel we are awake. The same is true of the intimations of the spiritual experiences in the beginning; but that too is dream again; it is an hollucination" (Dasabodha). Hence, in any eventuality, the saints are always calm and composed and outspoken. But to attain to this status one must grow self-less and indifferent. One must renounce the evanescent for the eternal. The sense of renunciation comes not of the saffron coloured garb but of indifference to the body; The conviction that I am not the body but the great soul is the real sign of spiritual knowledge". (Shankarāchārya – Sadachār). "The saints have no expectations nor pride nor interest nor again duality; All are equal for them; They are composed and their mind is ever attuned to Mine" (E. B.) This point is exquisitely expounded in the discourses on the 'Divine Vision and the Devotee; 'Devotion to Balkrishna and his care', 'Spiritual knowledge and the Pacification of the desire to know' and etc.

Is there anything in the universe that does not owe its being to Pranava? All that is and appears is an expression of the Pranava. He alone permeates through and through everything in the universe. Is it not indeed surprising that the loving and lovable Pranava should in loving anger expect to get satisfaction in salutation? This is lucidly brought out in 'The Gayatri Hymns', 'Know what? and 'the Spiritual Bliss'.

To wit, every discourse goes to the very root of the subject and is strewn with intense devotion, enlightenment and spiritual resignation. This has made the book facinating, and unique. The reader is sure to meet with enlightenment and joy while going through the book. The discourse on "Spiritual knowledge and the pacification of the desire to know' may be read first with profit. If a careful and repeated study of the 'Floral offerings' be undertaken along with careful study of the whole book, the aspirant, I am sure, will reap the high harvest of spiritual knowledge with the grace of Shri Sadguru Siddharameshwar Maharaja.

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Date : 21-3-58.

Khanderao Atmaram Sabnis

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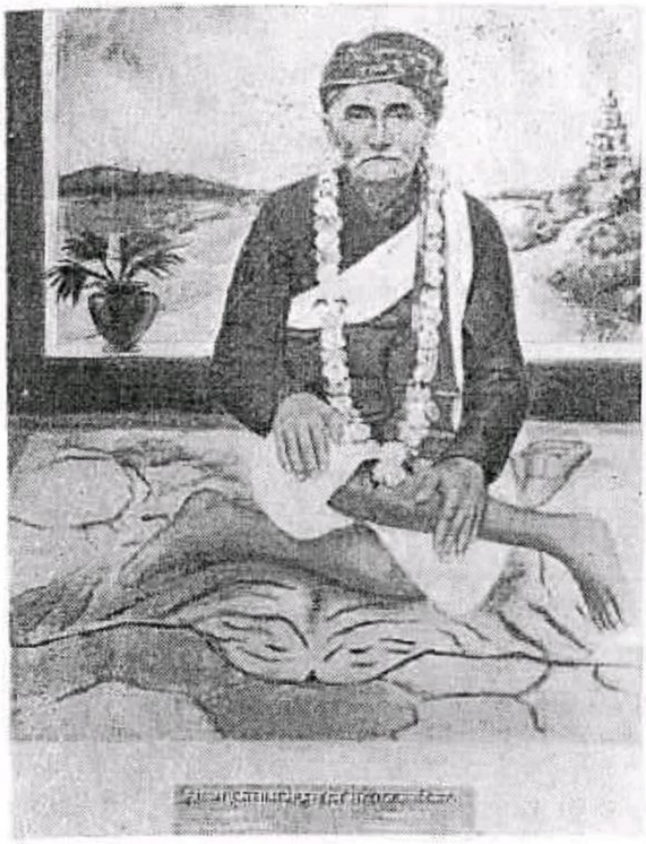

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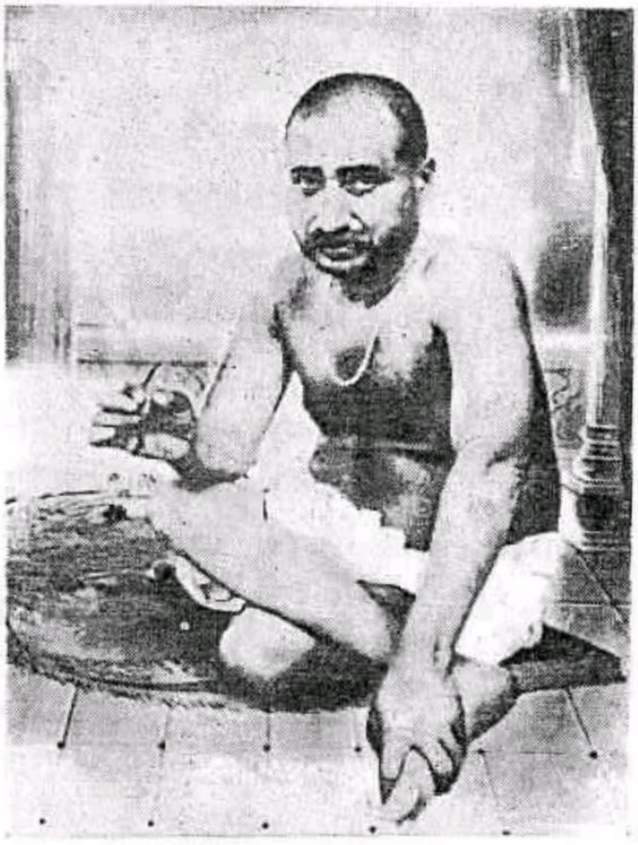

Sri Sadguru Siddharameshwar
Maharaj

Sri Sadguru Nisargadutta Maharaj

DIVINE VISION AND THE DEVOTEE

The word "Vision" stands for acquaintance and "divine" means crystalline understanding of the universal Energy. God and the devotee, though two in name, are one in spirit. In his very nature the latter is identical with the former. So long as one has not realised God, one does not know what is justice and injustice. But this realisation is justice done to the devotee. He then comes to know the distinction between justice and injustice, the essential and the contingent, right and wrong and the eternal and the evanescent; and this leads to his emancipation. The divine vision eliminates Individuality; the Manifest is just felt and is clearly distinguished from the Unmanifest. With the loss of individuality, the selfish interests also disappear. One cannot be judicious so long as one is selfish, nay, he cannot even know the significance of justice. But when the sense of individuality is replaced by that of manifestation, the devotee knows that he is pure consciousness all through.

The sense of manifestation is the awareness of oneself as only an expression of the Supreme Being. Yet the temporal life must continue with all its complex interactions. The spiritually enlightened saints do take part in it sportively, knowing that it is only a play of the universal consciousness. The fact that the saints, in their commerce with the rest of the world refer to themselves as individuals, some times gives rise to the misunderstanding that they too are as much involved in their worldly life as the common man is. But the saints are ever aware that it is only the pure consciousness that is expressing itself in different names and forms and continues to do so in ever new forms. It is true, the

saint does experience the pains and sorrows of the life, but, surely, not their sting. He is neither moved nor purturbed by the pleasures and pains and profits and losses of the world. To him, the unbearable events of the world are just a tame and harmless affair. Even petty things are at times unbearable to the common man; but the devotee remains unmoved even in the world rocking events; Hence, he is in a position to direct others to a safe position; but at first, people, in the fit of their petty prides, simply ignore him. But their subsequent experience drags them towards him. His behaviour is guided exclusively by the sense of justice. God, as justice incarnate, has neither any relations nor belongings as His own. Peace and happiness of the world is as it were His only treasure. The formless divine consciousness cannot have any thing as 'Its own' interest. This is the live temporal outline of the Bhakta.

THE SOUL, THE WORLD, BRAHMAN AND SELF REALISATION:

The consciousness of one's own being, of the world of things and its supporting Primal force are experienced all at once. Awareness of one's own being' does not mean here the usual psychical consciousness of oneself as an individual as opposed to the not-self, but implies the revelation of the mystery of existence. Prior to this, there is no experience of Brahman as being there, in the utter ignorance of one's own being. But the moment one is aware of this, he is directly aware of the world and the Brahman too. At this stage, i. e. the stage prior to the cosmic awareness, the self and its experiences are limited only to the worldly life. This life starts with the birth and ends in 'death'. It is obvious that after-

death experiences are not a thing to be had in this life. To be aware of ourself and of the world and God all of a sudden is a great mystery indeed! It is an unexpected gain; it is an absorbing and a mysterious event, extremely significant and great; but, it brings with it the heavy responsibility of Self-preservation, sustenance and Self-development as well; and no body can avoid it.

But for life before this experience nourishment is absolutely essential; one feels that all experience is engendered in feeding. One is not sure whether it would be death or disappearance of experience that ensues in the absence of nourishment. As experience is inextricably boundup with nourishment, the desire to probe into the mystery of life referred to above is interupted at every stage. One would surely die if one were not to eat; but till the moment of the present experience, there was no experience of "I was eating" or I have eaten" or that "I am going to eat; what we have is only a memory of these activities and not the experience as such. Yet what is this mystery that "I was alive" and "I am alive"? These two phases of our being are certainly not a matter of memory nor of inference but of direct experience. It is certainly here that the mystery lies. When we begin to think of this, all our thoughts are transmuted beyond recognition, beyond even, cognition; but when we regain our normal cognition, we feel as if we had experienced a great but unknown happiness and feel better.

Those persons who lead their life without ever pausing for a moment to know who or what they are, are given the traditional geneological history as their own. On the basis of this piece of information, the common man completes his journey of life in the pride of his family and tradition. During this period he is engaged in the customary and religious and other

morally desirable activities such as worship and meditation according to tradition. But even then at the time of death one has in one's mind the expectancy and fear of reward and punishment of the good and bad deads done during the life time. And he bids adieu to the world in this very state of mind. All the treasures and belongings collected and owned by him for his happiness during his life time are forever kept away from him; and he does not even once come into contact with them to know what has happen to them. And still his averice operates unabated till the last moment. Persons whom we have intensely loved are never to be seen after death. And yet the human being is blindly in ceaseless pursuit of these very interests to the last moment. Every one knows that his accidental contact with the world is a transient affair. Knowing it fully well that a time would come when this field of activity would not be even remembered, one is actively engaged in acquiring great material estates here. He never pauses for a moment to know why is it that he should be tempted so much by and greedy of the world of such a flimsy acqaintance. If he were ever to think of it, he would give up the temptation and greed and would be a contended loving man sans envy, sans enmity; and he would enjoy the beautitude born of his oneness with the knowledge of the universe and the mystery thereof. But this is not what actually takes place. He leads his life with the firm conviction that the world has been there prior to his existence with an ever extended tradition and that it is real. In his very presence he sees that the world is undergoing incessant change and yet he feels that it is real; he takes his own appearance and the ground which he stands on to be equally real. It is this conviction that prompts him to behave as he does. It never dawns on him that all this world could be cast into eternal oblivion in a moment.

When we concentrate our attention on the origin of thought, the thought process itself comes to an end. There is a hiatus for a while and again the process starts without our knowledge. The blank interval is a pleasant one. We feel that we are the parent to the thoughts that originate and operate in our minds. But the nature of this parenthood is not easy to grasp; and it would not be grasped by only a causal survey. We are the originators and make use of it in sustaining ourselves. What is this mistery that we and our thoughts are the mainstay of this life? The whole is contained in us and in our thoughts. When the thought process is at rest we feel that the world too is at rest.

When the creature begins to think of the centre of the self, he forms the habit of entering into the happy state; the mind turns away from the five fold objects of the external world and their enjoyment; getting an iternal turn, it begins to enjoy the objectless bliss. Having turned away from the external world, when the mind gets a peep into the interior, it feels that the world of objects is not meant for it. Prior to this experience the unsatiating enjoyments of sense would constantly challenge the mind to satisfy them. But from the inward turn onward its interest in them begins to fade. Unless one looses interest in the world of sense one cannot expect enjoyment of the internal bliss. Once this is enjoyed, the external happiness begins to lose its charms. Such a man as that (who has tasted of the inward bliss) is naturally loving and free from envy, contented and happy with others' prosperity, is friendly and innocent and free from deceit. He expects nothing; owing to the inward bliss, he gradually acquires an etherial and clear vision. He is full to the brim with the mystery and the wonder of the bliss. He dislikes envying the pleasures of other men and the world,

greed for wealth and honour. He is happy with the experience of the Self. So long as one has not this experience, one cannot expect the enjoyment of the bliss of the Self. Howsoever vociferous he may be about his achievements. One who has realised the self can never inflict pain on others. He simply gets the experience of the world, knows its nature—and hence, moulds his behaviour to suit the convenience of the people around him—and is at peace with it.

LIFE DIVINE AND THE SUPREME SELF

With intense love and heartfelt devotion, the devotee propitiates God; and when he is blessed by His Vision and grace, he feels ever happy in His presence. The constant presence establishes a virtual identity between the two. While seeking the presence of the Supreme Soul, the Bhakta renounces all associations in his life, from the meanest to the best. Having purged his being of the worst and the best along with the rest, he automatically wins the association of the Supreme Self. When the vile associations are cast off from the heart, the external depravities cannot as much touch him. It is contrary to truth to say that the devotee enjoying the presence of God is not felt to be venerable by the common man; and if it be his experience that such a man is not liked by the people, he can be sure that that man is certainly not an associate of the Supreme Self; and if any Bhakta (?) were to take himself to be an associate of God and were yet to be decried by others, he should take it that he is mistaken in his conviction. A man that has attained to the position of unstinted emancipation can never be disliked by other, for the people themselves are the very self-luminous soul, though ignorant of the fact, and the

associate of God is the Super-Self of the Human Race. It is a travesty of truth even to suggest that the Human soul could disparage the Super Soul.

In this world of immense variety, different beings of different types are suffering from different kinds of ailments and yet they are not prepared to throw off their miserable physical frame; that is, even when wailing under physical and mental pain, no one can get rid of self-love. If this be so, then is it right to say that men would be so short-sighted as to avoid their saviour, the enlightened soul ?. It is only the pseudo saints that the people get tired of. The needs of these so called godly persons are ever on the increase; and the already depressed people simply cannot bear it; that is why they try to avoid them; and no body can blame them for it. On the other hand, the saint, blessed by the vision of God, enjoys the bliss of the self; and it is inconceivable that he should hanker after wordly enjoyments and be a dead-weight to his society. That overflowing Reservoir of bliss, the beatific soul does and must confer only bliss on the people by his delightful and loving light. Even the atmosphere arouud him is enough to hearten the suffering souls, let alone the consoling word from his mouth ! He is like the waters of lake that give nourishment to the plants and trees around the brinks and the grass and crop fields near by. The saint also, wherever he may be, gives joy and sustaining energy to the men around him.

THE ASPIRANT AND THE SPIRITUAL THOUGHT

The "aspirant" in the present context means one who thinks of the spiritual life and thought. Spiritual thought

is the thought of the spirit, the Highest and the Best. This seeking after the meaning of the highest is called "The first half" by the saints. A proper understanding of this results in the Vision of God and eventually matures into the ascertainment of the true nature of the Self in the 'latter half'. The rationale of the search for the spiritual life is to prepare for the eternal life. From the moment of the consciousness of 'I' and "not I" one has to pull on with unwanted things and is whisked away from the desired ones. One expects to have one thing, while destiny present him with quite the otherwise. The cup is taken to the lip, but there is the inevitable slip before the very first sip; and one has to accept it mutely. Some, get tired of this dodge of life and try to find out a remedy for it. These are known as the victims of the threefold misery (Such persons are aware of their victimisation while the rest are not). This awareness of harrassment is the incipient stage of the spiritual aspiration. Only those that are harassed by the triple misery of life are the candidates eligible for spiritual life. Those who pull on willy-milly, hoping for the better without turning their minds to the soul, leave this world in utter agony. But one who, tired of the wretched life, takes to the path of the spirit, starts his life anew with contemplation and propitiation. It is here that the stage of the 'aspirant for salvation' in spiritual life begins. It is here, for the first time, that he gets some joy, piecemeal though, in prayer and worship. At this preliminary stage he gets the company of co-aspirants. Reading of the lives and works of the past incarnations of God, of Risis and yogins and of saints and sages, singing of the glories of the Name, visiting temples and a constant meditation on these result in the initial photic and phonic experiences of the mystic life; his desires are satisfied to an extent now. Thinking that he has had the vision of God, he intensifies

his efforts in the direction of fondly remembering the name of God and His worship.

In this state of the mind, the Bhakta has a glimpse of his cherished deity, quite frequently, which he takes to be the divine vision and is satisfied with it. At this juncture, he is sure to come into contact with a saint. The saint and now his preceptor makes it plain to him that what he has is not the real vision which is beyond the said experience and is to be had only through Self-realisation. At this point the pious aspirant gets into the stage of the meditator. In the beginning the Sādhaka is instructed into the secrets of his person and of the indwelling spirit; These are: the meaning and nature of Prāna, the various plexuses such as Mūtādhara, Swādhisthāna, Manipurā, Anahata, Vishuddha, Ajñyā and the Sahasrāra, the three cavities in the spinal cord viz. Idā, Pingalā and Susumnā and finally the nature and arousal of the Kundalini and the Nature of the Self. Later on he comes to know of the origin of the five elements, their activity, radiation and merits and defects. Meanwhile his mind undergoes the process of purification and acquires *composure*; and this, the Sādhaka experiences through the deep laid subtle centre of the Indweller. He also knows as to how and why it is there only that the deiform element is kindled. This knowledge transforms him into a pure, eternal and spiritual form of a Sadguru who is now in a position to initiate others into the secrets of the Spirit. The stage of sādhakahood ends here.

As the great saint Tukārāma says, the aspirant must put in ceaseless efforts in the pursuit of spiritual life. Thoughts arising at every moment must be utilised for self-knowledge. Every moment he must be on the alert to take an account of what he is and how he is

progressing in the direction of Self-experience; he must be watchful in ascertaining the natnre of this 'I' that is involved in the affairs of pleasure and pain arising out of sense experience.

We must know the significance of how it feels like to experience the Self when the senses are not operative; we must also know what the real difference is between a great soul and a poor creature. We the ordinary mortals possess the same kind of body as does a great soul; yet while he happens to be the saviour of the mankind, we are just insignificant wretched creatures! We must know the rationale of this incongruity; Is the Indwelling spirit in these two forms the same or different? For ought we know he appears to be as much a product of the temporal process as we are; and still there is that irreducible difference! Why? If both be the recipients of sence experiences, the reason of this great difference must be found out. The saint is a veritable Ocean pacific from within, while we are steeped in insatiable greed. We must know the "Why" of it: The perversion of meaning is taken to be as much a "meaning" and Why? The nature of the present embodied Self and the eternal Self must be properly understood. The self, with its material adjuncts is an emperical self. What is the nature of the Eternal self? What is its habitat? All these queries must be answered. For what possible preparations can ever be made for its achievement unless one knows what it is that needs be done? Under instructions from priests the world over, religious men perform acts of charity and riteousness; but how and where precisely is the benefit reaped? What is our exact form then? What is the nature of the fruit that we enjoy as the premium of the acts of charity for the purification of the self? The kind of the desired form kept in mind at the time of performing the charitable

deeds and the actual form we would be in must be ascertained first.

But there is no system in our routine life nor in the spiritual activities; hence, the aspirant should try to get to the deepest meaning for himself without dabbling into other people's affairs. One should think of the path way to God day and night. The nature of the active principle should be ascertained lest its activities be led astray. Those who waste their energies in useless persuits instead of harnessing them to the achievement of the highest meaning are sure to lose the game; while those who are engaged in the pursuit of the self must achieve identity with God. "They verily are that have realised the self. The rest are but the slaves of the flesh". This is why one must turn to spiritual life.

Spiritual life is a great Thing indeed! Its nature is unfalhomable. If a petty creature stands up and declares that he knows what spiritual life is, then we may take it that he is talking nonsense. For spiritual life is all in all, it is so great, so deep, so immense that nothing can stand comparison to it. Even the Cosmic Energy would pale into insignificance before it. Yet this energy tries to understand it again and again. Contemplation of spiritual life is a great bliss. Those that try to understand it consciously with the help of the intellect are lost to it. Rare is the person who, having concentrated on the source Atom of the Cosmic Energy enjoys the bliss of spiritual contemplation. But there are scores of those who take themselves to be spiritually inspired and hence perfect beings. They expect the common herd to honour them and respect every word they utter. The ignorant people on their part rush towards them for spiritual succor and do what they bid.

In fact the Pseudo saints are caught in an inescapable snare of greed; and hence what the poor people get in return is not the blessings of satisfaction but the ashes of their own interests in their bouls. The self style man of God, speaking *adnauseam* about the devotion to God and the preceptor and about spiritual matters, thinks himself to be spiritually perfect. But others are not so sure of him. As regards a saint, on the other hand men are on the look out for a chance to serve him more and more. But as the ever contented, composed and smiling soul, steeped in beatitude, desires nothing, they are left to serve in their own way which they do with enthusiasm and they never feel the pressure.

Greatness is always humble, loving, silent and satisfied. Happiness, tolerance, forbearance, composure and other allied qualities must be known by every one. Just as one experiences one's bodily states such as thirst, hunger, drousiness and pain, one must, with an equal ease, experience in oneself the characteristics connoted by the word "SAINT". As we know for certain that we need no more sleep, no more food at a given moment, so too we can be sure of the above characteristics from direct experience; They never need the explicit statement. One can then recognise their presence in others with the same ease. This is the test and experience of a tried spiritual leader.

THE MYSTIC

The essential characteristics of a mystic are all of them blissful; and he has them all in him. Now he clearly sees the difference between his characteristics before and after realisation, and is surprised at it. His present form is unchanging and unchangeable. No

more need he take care of it; and the uncared for form is imperishable eternal and he knows it well. Now he can cast a playful glance at himself and the world around him is changing every moment. The sensible is subject to change and destruction. All that is transient has an origin in time and he himself is free from change; he can never perish. This unchanging Eternal Soul views the ever-changing world as a matter of course and game.

All the characteristics of the saint naturally spring from his experience. As there are no desires left in him, nothing in the world of sense can ever tempt him. He lives in the fearless majesty of Self-realisation. His spiritual consciousness and speech and actions and behaviour arising from it are all naturally satisfying to him. He is moved to pity by the unsuccessful struggle of the creatures tied down to their bodies for the satisfaction of their petty interests. Even the great events of the world are just surface lines to him. The number of these lines that appear and disappear is infinite, Individuals are only the faint streaks of these lines. And only as such lines are they are ever recognised; with the disappearance of the lines, the acquaintance with them too comes to an end. When the streaks vanish, there remains nothing to recognise them as individuals. The interval between the two moments of emergence and disappearance of a line is what is called life. With the disappearance of a line the vanity fair of acquaintance also vanishes. The wiped out lines can never he seen again. The saint who has a direct experience of all this is always happy and free from desire. He is convinced that even the greatest of the great experiences of the world of sense is after all a momentary affair; impermanence is the very essence of

these experiences. Hence, pain and sorrow, greed and temptation, fear and anxiety can never touch him.

THE LĪLĀ (Play) OF GOD

Sport or play is natural to God as is Nature to herself. Whatever enters into experience all of a sudden cannot fit in with the calculus of imagination. These experiences are known as the Līlā of God. Without any prior intimation or indication we have a taste of our own being; and they say it is an instance of the sport of God. Excepting this one instance of the taste we have no knowledge of the nature of the Self. But again, even this bit of experience is hidden away from us without our knowledge. By a dint of the very same Līlā, we are forced into a series of activities and experiences: That I am a homosapian, that I am the body, my name is such and such, this is my religion and this, my duty and so on. There is no rest even for a moment. One action follows another; and there is no escape from them. We have to see them through. And this goes on inevitably till, per chance, it loses all its charm thanks to the inexorable conviction that what must be won is only the spiritual treasure. Everyone is a victim of the series of the dry and drab routine and none the wiser for it.

If ever the purpose be inquired into, different people come out with different accounts from these very data. Some depose it on oath that it is the nemesis of the actions of millions of previous lives. But no body has the direct experience of these past lives. Moreover, this is not an explanation of the "*WHY*" but can only be the "*HOW*" of the experience. It is obvious that this is no better than a fiction. Beautiful temples and residences are erected in our very presence. We live in some of them and put others to

use for various purposes. These have a definite purpose about them. Some of them are demolished for erecting better ones. But why ? Experience teaches that we need them. By the discovery of the various qualities of things engineers and scientists have provided mankind with various amenities; and they have proved that their imagination is factual and not fictitious. Taking into account the *Root Cause*, we must say their knowledge is a feat of imagination indeed! Dazed by the ingenious inventions and discoveries of the scientists, these interpreters of life base their explanations on empirical facts and offer them with the same conviction; but the suddenly experienced taste cannot be meaningfully interpreted in this way as related to the cosmic experience. All experience (except that of identity with the infinite) is confusing in one way or another; we take ourselves to be identical with it; and take its characteristics to be our own. And yet, it is also our experience that it vanishes at an unexpected moment and reappears at another.

We must know whether the said taste (experience) is always with us; and if not, why not ? We must also know the 'how' and 'why' of the emergence of the taste. The experience is to be had through gunas (qualities) and we must have a convincing knowledge of the nature of the taste. We name the taste as the Līlā of God; and we are not slow to designate ourselves with an arbitrary term. We talk of events, activities, utility and status-adjectives; particularly, the names designed to indicate greatness or otherwise are based on utility. Great designations have their origin in equally great use. If the utility be of a lower kind, so too is the name therefor; eventually, meanness is indicated by a mean word: when the world is spoken of as Māyā or illusion, it is codemned to be mean; but when the same thing is indicated by the phrase

"Playful act of God" it becomes great! We welcome the useful and decry the useless. In reality the facts are what they are. Who is the recipient of the high designation? Who confirms the uselessness for the condemnation? Who is He that seals these designations? What does He call Himself? What are we to say of Him? What name should we give Him after first-hand experience?

That we have experiences is a fact. It needs no proof nor evidence. We are also told about different experiences. We receive information regarding relations and instruction in the performance of activities and organise our behaviour accordingly. Some one from among these guides as the super expert initiats us — in his own way—into what is said to be the core of the Indwelling Spirit. But that too turns out to be a transient affair! For the acquintance secured thus does not possess the experiential core of the taste; and the initiator himself proves to be a part and parcel of that bit. Thus both he and his knowledge are lost to us. Now we are free to go our own way. But what if? For want of necessary taste, this self-help is equally helpless; we are where we were. What is it that we call the play of God? Why is it called so? What is the nature of the conviction of those who have designated the universe as the playful expression of God? What is their nature and who are they? How are we related to this 'sporting God' Whom we saw and touched and talked to, had friendship with and intense love for? We spoke of him as God, as our parent and as every thing else. Inspite of all this closeness and fondness, what was and is our relation to him? .....All the previous experiences with all their peculiarities have vanished. The Līlā of God disappears along with the pseudo experience with the advent of the present experience.

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THE SPIRITUAL ASPIRANT, THE FIRST MOMENT OF BLISS AND ITS CONTINUOUS GROWTH

The ever awaited first moment was the moment when I was convinced that I was not an individual at all. The idea of my individuality and welfare had set me burning all through so far. The scalding pain was beyond my capacity to endure. But there is not even a trace of it now. I am no more an individual. There is nothing to limit my 'being' now. With the disappearance of the evil signs of "Individuality" and the accompanying defects, the ideas of acquisition and renunciation have, automatically dropped down. The ever present anxiety and the gloom of the smouldering heart have vanished; and I am all beatitude, pure knowledge, pure consciousness. The tumours of innumerable desires and passion were simply unbearable. But, fortunately for me, I got hold of the Hymn divine "Hail Preceptor" (जयगुरु) and on its constant recitation, all the tumours of passions withered away as with a magic spell! With the first sigh of relief, I am ever free now. I am all bliss, sans spite, sans fear. This beatific conscious form of mine knows no bounds. I am my unique being The narrow conceptions of "I" and "Mine" have withered away. I belong to all and every one is mine. The "All" are but my own individuations; and all these together go to make up my beatific being. There is nothing like good or bad, profit or loss, high or low, mine or not mine for me hence. This is the reason of my infinite growth. Whatever the form or situation I may be in or whatever may I be doing, I ever remain the beatitude that I am. My, once suffocating, narrow activity is unbound now. I am the Great active force, the One in all. The actions of all are my own actions; the names of all are but my

own epithets. Whatever I say of myself that I am. No body opposes me and I oppose none for there is none "other—than—myself" there to oppose. Bliss reclines on the bed of Bliss. The repose itself has turned into bliss.

There is nothing that I ought or oughtnot to do. But my activity goes on every where, every moment. Words like freedom and salvation are a matter of festivity only. Love and anger are divided equally among all as are work and recreation. My characteristics of immensity and majesty, my pure energy and my all, having attained to the Golden-core, repose in bliss as the Atom of atoms. Thither shines forth my pure consciousness in its majestic, splendour whither my Primordial Energy has its eighth form. Thanks to the spell of "Hail Guru". (जयगुरु) The consciousness brought into experience by the whimper of the term "Life" has crossed the bounds within the human reach; has come into its own—The Absolute Being. Why and how it (the consciousness) became self-conscious and active is obvious now. The experience of the world is no more that of the world as such, but is the blossoming forth of the self same conscious Principle—God; and what is it? It is pure Primal knowledge, conscious form, the Primordial "I" consciousness, that is capable of assuming any form it desires. It is designated as God. (The core of consciousness that has all the experiences is empirically known as God).

The present experience (of mine) of the world as the divine expression is not for any profit nor for loss. It is the pure, simple, natural flow of beatific consciousness. It has neither sex-distructions nor of God and his devotee nor of Brāhman and Māyā. It is the unique blissful experience of the primal Unity. The (now) unitive trinity (knower, knowledge and the known) of the supreme Being is blossoming forth in its majesty. Every object

in the universe has lost its "objectivity" (for me) and the residual soul, the bliss is what enjoys its supremacy. He that once meditated on the bliss and peace is himself the ocean of peace and bliss now. "Glory to the eternal Truth – Sadguru – The Supreme Self".

DEVOTEE AND THE BLESSINGS OF GOD

The Bhakta pours out his devotion, moulds his behaviour in every respect in accordance with the will of God. In turn he finds that God is pleased with him; and this his conviction takes him nearer to God and his love and friendship with Him grow richer and richer. The process of surrendering to the will of God in every respect results in His blessings. The heart of one whom God is pleased with is full to the brim with the Grace and is to be seen in every grain of his being. Sadhus and Pundits, artists and rich persons think and say they are blessed by God. But their behaviour and activities, feelings and looks do not vindicate their conviction. If what they say be true, why the dissatisfaction then that peeps through their movements? One can understand its presence in the lives of ordinary mortals; it is quite natural. But why should it be seen in those who profess themselves to be the chosen ones? We must, hence, thoroughly investigate into the nature of the divine blessing.

One who is blessed by God is a blissful soul. All the promptings and experiences activated by it (the bliss) must of necessity be equally blissful as the self same soul is the experiment too. The blessed soul is bliss incarnate, phenomenal adjuncts being purely nominal. It is immaterial whether the adjuncts are pleasing or not; eternal blissfulness is its core. Prior to the Grace, the Bhakta has to rely on the means for his well

being. But after the event, the situation does not remain the same. Being at peace with himself, he looks at the objects of enjoyment with perfect indifference. He is content with whatever he has and is happy to see others in happiness. If a person believes that he is blessed by God and is still unhappy, it is better that he give up this delusion and strive for the coveted Grace with sincerity and honesty. Divine plenitude and favour is not judged by the pleasure though the numerous objects of sense, but by the internal contentment. This verily is the blessing of God.

THE UNITIVE LIFE

Him have I seen now, whom I so earnestly desired to. I met myself. The meeting requires an extremely difficult and elaborate preparation. I pined to see the most Beloved one and it had to be done. It was impossible for me to do without it. I was sure to die if I were not to do it. If death be the inevitable end, why not wither away in harness?—Even with the innermost sincerity of my whole being, I was not able to get at It; and the situation was unbearable. Yet, with love and determination, eagerness and courage, I started on my journey. I had to get through different stages and places in the undertaking: Being quick and deft It would not allow me cognition, at first. But lo, I saw It to day, I was sure. It was the same and was happy. But the very next moment I felt, perhaps it was not It. Whenever I saw It, I was intent on observing It keenly; but not knowing Its nature with certitude, could not decide either way. I could not be sure that It was my Beloved, the centre of my being. Being an adept in the art of "Make-up" as the very self-knowledge that It was,

It dodged me with a quick change of form ere I could arrive at a conclusion. (These were the visions of various Incarnations, of Rishis and saints—internal visions in the process of Dhyānā and Dhāranā and external ones of the waking state eventual to the siddhis such as Vāksiddhi (The power of prophesey), Clairvoyance, Clairaudience and the power to cure normally incurable diseases etc. Some were eager to serve me, to have faith in me and to honour me; and this led me to think that I had seen It for certain; it is here that Its skill in the art of "make-up" lies. It is so deft in the art of changing the form, quality and knowledge that the intellect does not even know where it stands, let alone the penetration through its nature. But lo! What is this miracle? Oh! the wonder of wonders! ... The flash! curiously glistening majestic splendour! ... But where is it? It has disappeared in a flicker before I could get time to apprehend It. No.....Nothing could be known about what happened to me or to the lightening. I could not say whether the extremely swift flash and the means of my reconnaisance were one and the same or different..... But.....What a surprising Glitter! In the glow of the flashing miracle, the whole of the cosmic array is experienced directly. The contact is immensely interesting. The flash experience makes one feel that it should be as spicy forever; and this is the characteristic feeling of the cosmic experience. But in the very attempt to arrest the glowing flash for a basic understanding, one loses it along with the preparedness and precautions. And where is that fond interest in the cosmic affair? No, not even a trace of it. It is extremely difficult to get at the root of the conscious energy—the perfect adept in the art of assuming an infinite variety of forms. The consciousness to be apprehended and the power of concentration are one and the same. Being polymorphous by nature, it cannot

be pinned down to any definite form or name or place, as for instance, the internal experiences of the Dhyāna Yogin; In the first instance the attention of the meditator is silence in excelsis. This is transformed into light; the light assumes the form of space, the space in turn changes into movement. This is transmitted, further, into air and air into fire; the fire changes into water and the water, into earth; lastly, the earth evolves into the world of things organic and inorganic. The time taken by the transformation of the original silence through the successive stages cannot be stated in definite terms. In tracing the source of the quick consciousness, even yogins get confused at times. This is what happens in Dhyāna; and what is the case with the conscious state (the evolution in the phenomena)? The rains turn into water, which takes the form of the juices in the vegitables and grains; These again change into tastes and essences which supply nourishment and energy. The energy takes the forms of knowledge, courage, valour and cunning. Till this point (at least), one cannot lay one's finger on any one of them as *the* definite form. The limbless process goes on ... Neither form nor name nor quality is enduring. Nothing is permanent and determinate.

The felt experience of the spiritually enlightened is extremely difficult to negotiate with. This may either mean that it is beyond one's capacity to get at it or is beyond reach; yet one must go ahead with concentration (Dhyāna-Yoga). The identity of the "I" as the miracle in the process of the dazzling glitter and the "ego" of the emperical consciousness prior to the experience must be firmly established in Dhyāna-Yoga. Is the spiritually saturated soul the same as the experience or is It even beyond that? There is no witness (duality) to the experience one has in the process of Dhyāna-yoga. At the enlightened stage,

even the sense organs are involved in the meditation of the spiritual adept. For the sense organs and the meditation are the same fabric. Similarly, the sense organs and the five elements are one and the same at the core. The three kinds (Adhibhuta, Adhidaiva and Adhyātmā), the three Vritti "(वृत्ती)" qualities (Sātvika, Rājasa and Tāmasa) and the three sources of knowledge (Perception, Inference and Testimony) were seen, are being seen and lo They are not there! The characteristics of origination, sustenance and destruction come under Dhyāna Yoga itself; The activity of Prakriti in all its forms—manifest and unmanifest—and the consciousness of Pūrusha are also included in it. In the Dhyāna-yoga process, the eight varieties are activated simultaneously and are experienced as such. All these, in a single unitive experience I constitute the contemplation. Meditation, consciousness, experience are all but a single unity.

Dhyāna-yoga is the supreme activity of life. Concentration is the central thing in experience. The transformation of Dhyāna-yoga into Jñana yoga is a difficult process. In the consummation of this process alone is the Atman cognised with certitude. As long as Dhyāna-yoga is not completely transformed into Jnāna yoga so long there is no self knowledge. As already said above, the out cropping of the eight is one such point of reference in the process of the absorption. The test of Dhyāna is knowledge itself. Then follows the ineffable duality of knowledge and the Atman. In the experiential knowledge there is a race between knowledge as Self and the Self as Self. But in the deep samādhi there is an understanding between contemplation and the Self. This results in the realisation of bliss. The bliss is transformed into supreme beatitude and the self is absorbed in the supreme Spirit. Knowledge to itself, contemplation into itself, the primal Māyā, God,

The Absolute state and the original throb are all a single whole of self experience. The ever cherished and desired Being is realised here. Prior to this, in the process of the attainment of the sidhis incidental to Dhyāna-yoga, there ooze forth experiences in the form of arts, love and memories of past lives in different regions such as Pātāla and Swarga and Kailas. In some cases one has a taste of different siddhis and Avatāras and of a series of meetings with others in different regions; There are experiences of one's being the Brahmā of Satya Region, Shiva of Kailas and Vishnu of Vaikunth from time immemorial. Again there are different phases of the yogin's feelings-the best and the worst and the endless panoramas, not pleasant nor false nor enduring; and the inevitable adjuncts of Dhyāna-yoga must go on till it is transformed into Jnāna-yoga i.e. the transition from the Samprajūata to the Asamprajūata state of Samadhi. Till then. there is no self-realisation. But on the other hand, if, in the very process of this transition the nature of this phase of Dhyāna-yoga be known, self realisation is automatic.

All the experiences and visions arising out of Dhyāna-yoga are transitory. In the contemplation, there is an infinite variety of phases and forms and none of them is lasting. Whatever is taken to be helpful and great and determinate varnishes in an instant and a new form takes its place to yield place to the next. That knowledge from which all the varieties issue forth in experience such as earth, water, fire, air, ether and their very various specifications, etc. is itself unstable. Starting from meditation, the contemplating individual soul (प्रत्यगात्मा), having experienced a taste of the previous lives, is further transformed into the Primal Māyā, Primordial energy and God head and even into the characteristics of the supreme

self by the power of the meditation; and all this for a trice and it disappears. It is here that it is called Kāla, the final liquidation of his individuality. It is here that its separation (from itself is compensated for and finds itself with spiritual certitude never to be lost again. The imperishable, indissolable eternal verity Paramatman shines forth with perfection beyond the reach of empirical experience.

KNOW WHAT?

The continuous process of acquaintance with the environment is going on since the birth of the I consciousness from the moment of the rise of this consciousness, we begin to learn the lessons of cognitions. Of these, especially two are unlearnt: Waking and sleeping. But the rest of the innate tendencies stimulated by the environment and the means of their satisfaction must be acquired and understood. Though the "I consciousness" is automatic, hence effortless, one has to go through a series of getting to know in other respects. One has to learn to do various things such as eating, drinking, etc. as also to know different things and their use through verbalisation and performance. Slowly one must also learn about ones own person and its care. Some of the acts and characteristics are to be mastered as of necessity and of ones liking; while there are others which, though not essential nor of interest, must also be learnt. In the process of conscious learning, over and above the oceanic expanse of the world of things, there rushes in the spatə of still greater magnitude. Not only the known and the unknown things of the world, we are told, but also those that are beyond it must be negotiated. But, before trying to know the things beyond, we must know, we are told, the controller and support of the universe called God, so that other things may be known with his help. But who or what are they

that inform us about these steps? In the first instance there are the Purānas which are based on the Vedās and other Shāstrās. We come to know the history of our forefathers; the sciences (Shāstrā) guide us in our overall behaviour. The Vedas take us to the "*Why*" of these activities. These Vedās assert that there is God and also that there are other regions beyond the world of sense —*Inter alia*—we come to learn that the blessing of God is the first thing to be achieved.

Who is God and how is he to be propitiated? This is to be achieved, we are told by forming friendship with saintly persons and by regularly and devoutly carrying out their instructions. But again, we are also told, that it is a matter of rare fortune that one comes across such a saintly soul. For, to find out and befriend a person who expects nothing from anyone, who is blessed by self-realisation, whose heart is full of contentment, compassion and blessing and who is enjoying an eternal unitive life in the supreme self, is what is called a rare fortune. And when by a stroke of good fortune one comes across such persons, he should know it that He himself is the God. Now, the saintly soul tells us "You yourself are God; Think of him alone, meditate on his being. Do not engage yourself in thinking of yourself or of any body else"; and also tells us of the rules to be followed in meditation. Know What? The process starts again, from here.

For a while, I used to deal with various matters and perform activities such as knowing and learning with the idea of my being a human being born of the "I – consciousness." Next, I started meditating on my self as God in order to know myself. But now, I know that "I am the knower" of whatever I remember or perceive or feel;

hence ignoring all that is remembered, perceived or felt, I contemplate on the nature of the knower. Whatever I can apprehend has its origin in myself. I see; I know. I am sitting in a secluded place where no body can see me, with my eyes half-closed – I am not aware whether they are closed or partially open–whatever I remember or perceive or feel or experience within myself comes into being from within myself. My meditation is my torch and what I see is its light. I am convinced, all that I see and remember is just the light of my meditation. I get this experience effortlessly when the light is set burning. My meditation and the sensible world around are a single dynamic art of life.

It is only my spiritual awakening in the form of contemplation that has extended itself into the world of sense around me. When this awakening is absent, the world of sense too is absent. In the absence of contemplation, the world process also is not there. What beyond this world is quite clear to me I can clearly see that shining Real self, my veritable guide, now. He alone is there beyond this world—all in all and in his fullness. Now I do not feel the necessity of meditation any more. For the very nature of meditation is such that it is spontaneous. In its process it gives rise to innumerable forms and names and qualities. How could all these ever be cognised or otherwise recorded? And what have I got to do with it all? Now I am convinced beyond doubt that this meditation of mine is born of God; and the world of things is the product of my meditation only. The cyclic process of origination, sustenance and destruction is the very core of its (of the world) being. Howsoever more I may try to know, the same process must repeat as often! My inquisitiveness has come to an end.

SPIRITUAL BLISS

The aspirant observes the spiritual experiments performed on himself, their effects and the eventual experiences as well; he sorts them out, retains the congenial modes and eliminates the harmful ones. The Guiding Star directs him by its own spiritual experience. With all the sincerity at his command, the intensely devout aspirant tries to master the directions. He, verily is a satyagrahin who insists on having only that happiness (spiritual) which he gets exclusively through his own efforts. He has no patience with those that speak without any spiritual experience. People, innocent of this experience habitually talk nonsense or boast on the strength of hearsay or casual reading. But the satyagrahin never cares for what they say. He starts on his journey steadfastly with intense devotion, keeping in mind the directions given by the guiding stars. Careless of what others say in their ignorance, he is absorbed in his spiritual experiments and experiences; and the journey continues.

One already has the experience of the world through his senses; hence, he tries, as far as possible, to depend only on his own person in the spiritual experiments; and is engaged in the pursuit of the eternal happiness. He tries to gauge the extent to which he can go with the minimum of help from others and eschews the use of so many things in the world. He goes ahead with his spiritual pursuit thinking of making the maximum use of his own person, for ease. In due course of time, the aspirant is sure to win peace.

Peace means satisfaction. Nothing is wanting now; The satyagrahin has got enough and to spare. That is why he utters Oam Shāntīh thrice to express the immensity of satisfaction. One who has attained to this

condition is satisfied and his behaviour reveals it; his conversation is pleasing to others. He has to lose nothing in speaking with others. He expects nothing from those whom he deals with. Some so called spiritual guides appear to ask for a heavy price for their word. Why should it be so? If they expect something in return from their audience, it means that they have not as yet crossed even the stage of a begger. Is expecting material returns from others in any way different from begging? If it be true that he has attained to happiness beyond the reach of ordinary mortals, why should he expect a beggarly share from the material gains? If he has in his possession the blissful spring of eternal life, why should he reveal the mean mentality of asking for a price for his dealings with others? Why this wretched behaviour when one has attained to the internal happiness indicated by the slogan "Oam Shāntih"? It is impossible that a man that has realised his self should ever expect things from others. On the contrary an enlightened person feeds others on spiritual food with absolute ease. His word and behaviour and contact and presence are (always) agreeable to others and increase their happiness.

As the happiness of the people increase, they begin to love him with greater sincerity. They take him to be the fountain head of all their happiness. They know his importance in their life. Just as they acquire and store food even at the cost of their life, so too do they take care of one who has attained to the position of eternal peace. The meaning of "eternal peace" is Suigenesis, absolute status, identity with the universal spirit, perfection.

Yet some men get to know some occult processes from great saints and practice them. This enables them to acquire certain occult powers. With these at their

command they are misled into thinking that they now have what they were striving for; style themselves as Raja-yogins, behave irresponsibly and are absorbed in the worst type of reprehensible enjoyments. It is all like a dying donkey cured by a kindly soul, fondly returning to its dirty routine course of life. It is an awefully stupid waste of life.

There are lots of people who are labouring under the delusion that they are Rajayogins, learned souls and engage themselves in the avid pursuit of material pleasures. But one who has once tasted the pure bliss of the eternal life in Brahman is forever satisfied. How can he ever like the material pleasure that is sheer weariness of flesh ?

It is impossible that the spiritually perfect soul should ever desire to be called the preceptor or to make others bow down before him or to expect all to honour his word in every respect. One who gets the highest kind of happiness from his life source has no interest in material happiness. That is spiritual happiness which makes one ever happy. These are the external qualities characterising the enlightened satyagrahin.

THE TENDER HEART OF THE SAINT

The saint is always tender of heart. That which is pained at the miseries of others is a tender heart. The heart of the mother is called tender. We come to know at a glance why the mothers heart is called the worthiest heart. The new born baby is just a live piece of flesh. The intense feeling and understanding with which the mother nurses her child on the meagre strength of the observation of its movements and heart beats is what is called a tender heart. The movements of the baby and

the heart-beats of the mother are as if transformed into a single blend. In a moment she wakes up from her deep sleep, feels the child, looks at it carefully, makes sure that it is safe and then goes to sleep again. Whether sleeping or wide awake, all her being is attuned to the movements of the child. Even then, in comparison to the heart of the saint, it stands much lower in the scale. For she does not recognise any other child beyond her own. But that is not the case with the heart of the saint. Everyone of the beings is its own child and it knows them all from beginning to end.

The heart of the mother is full of tenderness but is limited to the child only; but that of the saint, being all inclusive, is tuned to the life of all of them. It knows the "*HOW*" and "*whence*" of the origin of each one of them, and the vicissitudes they have to go through. The term saint implies a pure, eternal and perfect life. It connotes the direct experience of the absolute Being. In it there shines out the life eternal pure and peaceful. That is known as the supreme Self. There are many people busy in the name and garb of saints; and many more innocent ones are intensely attached to them. There are instances of immoral activities perpetrated by people, in the company of wolves in the garb of saints. In fact, those who have reached saint-hood have no need for a special attire; for their interior being is full to the brim with spiritual knowledge and pacific repose; it is saturated in its own being through knowledge. There is nothing wanting in it. This his spiritual state, he always tries to keep away from the sight of others. He practices his Sādhanâ in such a way as not to be discovered by others; he has absolutely no use for the external marks of saintliness; he selects his dress which is in keeping with the time and

place and climate. His spiritual nature is hidden by his body. The pseudo-saints, on the other hand, are busy in fulfilling their vile designs under the name and garb of a saint. As the mind of the saint is one with the pure self, he never looks at people with any expectation whatsoever. Being in touch with the Atom, the first (and also final) cause of the universe, he knows its nature quite well. Blossoming forth is the very nature of the core of this Atom, hence changes and differentiation are bound to be there. Knowing this well, the saint is neither elated by the pleasing events nor depressed by the opposite ones. He has gauged the depth (i. e. the shallowness) of the knowledge of the common man. He knows its nature from beginning to end. He knows the "*how*" and "*why*" of the mentality, adventitions or otherwise, hence too, the worthlessness of its achievements and failures. The needs of the body prompt the creature to acqnire means of sustenance; but the greed for these, overhits the mark and makes the creature pursue them to the point of uselessness; and all this, without the least idea of what awaits the life in future. Knowing this, as he does, the saint sincerely tries to open his heart (the nature of truth) before the common man. He knows what the welfare of the people lies in much better than does the mother, of her own child; that is why the heart of the saint is said to be so kind.

The saint is never a victim of passions. Life is a mixture of passions and emotions. Atman, the origin of passions and emotions is the very core of the saint's vision, the nature of which he is thoroughly acquainted with. He knows its activities and varieties of manifestations, as well as their consequences; and this is why he is free from passions. The life principle is the principle of feelings and passions and emotions. Desires and

passions engendered in this principle are just emotive experiences; they have nothing of substance in them. Yet the poor creature thinks them to be of great significance in his life, embraces the basically worthless desires of hoarding, indulges in sense enjoyment and runs after them helplessly. In the course of his life, he comes to possess some knowledge and ability, art and honour; the awareness of it sets waves of prominence, of greatness and pride and he is not in a position to control them, even as a weeping child cannot control its sobs. This is all the more so with those who get swolen headed by their achievements. The saints are very sorry for them and are moved to pity by their foolish vanity. These misguided men are deluded into thinking that they are doing great deeds and take pride in that greatness. But what does the saint feel about it all? A young child makes a Thud by striking a banana tree bark against a hard background; it is deafencing, but has no force in it. The greatness of the achievements of the world are equally hollow; (and all ideas of greatness, be they worldly or spiritual, are vain). Hence, the saint is never affected by his spiritual achievements; he is free from passions and is indifferent to actions and emotions. Men pine for the socalled achievements, and the saint sincerely tries to disuade them from the wild-goose-chase and show them the proper way to their salvation. The mother, with the sincerity of her heart but in ignorance, feeds the roots of misery, while the saint, with the same intensity of feeling, weeds them out. With the acquaintance of the mother the misery staŕts while with that of the saint, happiness dawns. The comman man finds the consummation of his purpose where the saint sees only worthlessness. What the creature takes to be the essential sides to his benefit and tries to acquire them with all his might, the saint knows to be sheer trash. Small children gleen bits of

broken and useless pieces of articles from garbage heaps and store them with an intension to play with them, but when a scuffle ensues due to the obstinacy of one or another of the kids they start fighting among themselves and hurts one another. But the elderlies find it to be a worthless waste of energy. A madman collects dirty and useless things and embrāces them with fondness. But if a normal person were to ask him to throw them off, he would atonce start quarrelling with him. The acquisitiveness of the common herd is equally worthless; still they go on with their storing activities without the least regard for others' rightful share. They do not allow others even to get the bearest minimum of life's necessities and with foul play at that. They pretend to be great and learned; harass the people for exacting honour from them and one fine morning they pass away from this world. These things, passing show before the sage, pierce his heart painfully. The worthless selfishness in not helping one's kind in the accidental material events is called mean selfishness by the saints. The saintly heart is filled with compassion. It clearly sees before it the state prior to the beginning and the antecedents of the latter, the sufferings due to the possession of the body and the overall end of these all; and hence he sincerely tries to convince men of the enduring truth. This is what the tender heart of a saint is.

DEVOTION TO BALAKRISHNA AND HIS CARE

The nursing and care of God won through devotion, though residing in the heart, is more difficult than the Upāsanā; but it is also easy, in a way for one who does it with love and tenderness. Before realisation, during

the process of Bhakti, Bhajan and renunciation, the experience of the immensity of God is on the increase. But as the knowledge i. e. vision becomes frequent, it (immensity) gets narrower and narrower day by day. Here vision and knowledge are identical. In whatever form and name he is propitiated that form and name he presents himself in. The various forms taken by him are woven into hymns and prayers and are sung by the common man. When the devotee sees this God who assumes innumerable names and forms in his state prior to Avatar, he is filled with boundless wonder. The Devotee with his firm determination and God by his facination for devotion are attracted towards each other, and the moment they come face to face, they merge, the one into the other. The devotee loses his phenomenal consciousness automatically, and when it returns, he finds that he has lost his identity – lost into that of God which cannot be separated again. "God within, God without, He has imprisoned me in his abode—this stone is utilised now and I am relieved of my being for good". This is the sort of identity that he enjoys in astonishment. At this very moment he comes across the Sadguru (i. e. he knows the real nature of Being) and sticks to him and lo! God is revealed! The creator, enjoyer and destroyer of all names and forms, the controller of all powers, *sui generis*, is revealed now. This is the God, the supreme prius, the very Self self-luminons, self-imspired and self-conscient. Here only do the primal Guṇas originate. Though atomic in character, he has in him the absolute power to do what he wills, in accordance with the emotive charactor of the Gaṇas and to take any form that suggests itself to him. This is the atomic centre, atomic energy, the first and final cause of the universe. The first cause, and first time, the first Guṇa, and Ganapati the lord of the Guṇas, and spirituality and divinity, world of pheno-

mena, and the Primal energy, the Benevolant power-God and the Primordial Māyā, the Lord of the dramatic art and deities of emotion, the five great elements and the three Guṇas, Purusa and Prakriti have all of them their origin here. The God of gods, the soul of the movable and the immovable, the universal soul, Natura–Naturous the all purvasive, qualified Brahman, the beloved of the Bhaktas, the aboad of the Bhaktas, the ocean of love and devotion is born here only. This is Adinārāyana, residing in the hearts of the devotees; the saints call him Gopalakrishna or Bālakrishna. For, in the beginning he is seen to be the atom of atoms, just a spiriton. By nature he is innocence incarnate. He is easily moved by emotions and becomes many (immense) in accordance with the direction taken by the emotions. The nature of the expansion is determined by the excess of one or another of the three guṇas. He manifests himself through each one of three guṇas at different times in a non–partisan spirit. As the saints are closely acquainted with him, they know what guṇa he would induce at any given moment and what the consequences would be; and hence they disuade him from the excess of his nature, particularly from indulgence in the eventual emotionality. Excess of growth in any guṇa is dangerous. Satva Guṇa is absolutely good; yet even that is harmful when hypertrophied; Rājas is restless and overbearing, while Tāmas is blind and arrogant. Knowing this well, the wise man keeps his soul away from the effects of the guṇas. Hence the energy of the soul remains undiminished and develops in the right direction.

Satisfaction of various desires increases the taste for them. The thirst for enjoyment slowly decreases the power of the soul in imperceptible degrees. But the latter, enmeshed by the guṇas, never thinks about it. Divorced

from the three guṇas, the soul has nothing but pure happiness and peace at its roots; but the bound soul runs after the guṇas in the hope of getting happiness, without even once tasting the real peace; misery and pain are the inevitable consequences. But when, setting aside the temptation of the guṇas, the devotee finds his pure soul, he fondly takes to its rearing with love and sincerity, only when the devotion is successful is the Atman realised. He is seen as a child at the dawn of the victory and hence is called the child of victory (yashas = Victory; yashoda—one who confers victory. Lord Krishna is called the sun of yashoda). He grows and takes a cosmic form. That which grows is very small in the beginning; so is this God, of the Bhaktas seen to be very small by them in the initial stage. Atman, the main stay of the three Guṇas and five elements, appears to be extremely subtle and exclusively composed of guṇas āt their first appearance. Thanks to sensuous avidity, it reaches a deplorable stage of degeneration, but the blessings of the Guru reveal His prestine pure form and that is final. Now the Bhakta is on his alert not to allow it to be poluted by the cravings for sensuous pleasures. He, in whom the forteen lores, sixtyfour arts and the eight sidhis are naturally engendered, and by whose act of will the whole universe comes into being, himself was divested of his six fold glory. But now his real nature is clear to the Bhakta. The firmer it is in its nature, the greater becomes the power and strength of the soul. Hence, the saints do not allow it to lose its steadiness. The crux of rearing it lies in keeping it firm, undeflected by the presence of the guṇas. The security and consolidation of what is gained is more strenuous than the efforts spent on its acquisition. Many a time great achievements are reduced to nullity just for lack of protection. If this spiritual gain of the soul be eclipsed by sensuous desires,

it is shaken to its very roots. Once the nature of the self is known, keeping it firm in its nature is the only thing that counts. It is very difficult to keep the guṇas at rest. That is why the saints advise us to stabilise the self-knowledge. Those who have released and stabilised self-knowledge are the persons whose glory is sung from time immemorial. It is only their names that form the basis of divine meditation. Shri Vishnu, Shankar, Dattatraya, Shrikrishna and Shri Rama are some of the innumerable names given to God. Originally, these were the names given to the human forms. But in virtue of their strenuous penance, they came to possess the "how", and "why", the "what" and "whence" of the experience of the self and the world; as a result of the penance they came to know the root cause of the experience. They had a firm grip on its nature and on the method of its stabilisation; and they acted accordingly. This was crystallized for the use of the common man.

As men came to know more and more of it, the fame of the piouneers too pervaded the four corners of the world; that is how they came to be known as the incarnations of God; aud with their name and fame they were declared by men to be God incarnate. Temples were built in their name; the Bhakti cult took firm roots in the soil; the followers pursued their faith sincerely and were happy; and the tradition continues. Those who came to possess the knowledge of the self and kept it pure and secure are known to be gods and saints; while those who utilised it for the sake of sense enjoyment are called devils and Demons or Rāvanās. The highest and rare gain is difficult of achievement; but, if achieved, it is superlatively beneficient; and if not properly cared for, is equally harmful. To digest high achievements is not an easy thing. Sup reme secrets are very difficult to guard, and

hamrful if made public. One who knows the great secret and calmly keeps it as such is called a perfect man or a saint or God. Common man is scandalous by nature. One who is scandalous is a lowly person, while one who remains silent and calm even when he knows the weak points of others is called omniscient. One who does not get excited by the possession of spiritual knowledge of the root cause can, with love and devotion, cultivate and brighten it. Devotion and prayer and renunciation are firmly established in him. He is always free from desires; wherever he be, he has the aura of peace and happiness about him. The auriole shown around the heads of great persons is a pictorial repeesentations of this fact. The bright circle redresents his divinity; his enlightenment; it is the sign of pnrity, peace and bliss. Whoever approaches such a person gets an unsolicited touch of the divine bliss; this emanation is eventual to the keeping of the indwelling universal spirit in a state of perfect rest. Pleased with devotion and prayer, Balakrishna start his divine sport. The saint never acts with any intention as such. All his activities are an expression of the divine Lilā. But none can succeed in testing its veracity through intellect; Divine Lilā is beyond the capacity of the human intellect to penerate through. It is unique. God alone understand His divine play.

SPIRITUAL KNOWLEDGE AND THE PACIFICATION OF THE DESIRE TO KNOW -

From the moment of consciousness of one's own being, one aspires to be more and more happy; and this is the origin of all activity in the universe. This is how the universe came into being through the activity of the primal atomic (Atmic) consciousness. But what is this

atomic consciousness? There was nothing, not even a trace of appearance before self-consciousness; and in this state there came into being the consciousness of one's own existence, the awareness of one's own being! In fact, there was neither time nor space nor cause. The awareness had no cause for it; hence, it is futile to name one. There was no time, hence it cannot be dated. There was no space; hence, its location is meaning less. That is why the Vedas, Shrutis and great yogins like S'ankar declare, on the ground of intuitive experience, that it has neither cause nor time nor space. There was no sun then, for there was no space for him to be. Yet the atomic consciousness was there and was felt as such and nothing more. Why so? For there was nothing over and above it to be aware of! The awareness only of being was there. How long this state lasted, there are no means to ascertain. But the great miracle is that the self-consciousness was there; with it, there was the cosmic will followed by its realisation. This is how the miracle materialised and was later designated as God. Hence man was convinced that wherever there was miracle there was God and wherever there was God there was miracle too. This conviction led him to propitiate God. But he could not specify the essential nature of God. Different people look to different forms of worship; and the practice goes on. That, God and miracle are one is true, but the method of interpretation here is absolutely different from what it is elsewhere, is unique, is the reverse one. One who desires nothing but the vision of God can alone find it, understand it; and the wonder of wonders is that he attains to absolute bliss. Only the consciousness that scintillated in the Beginning participates in the bliss; for it alone has a yearning for perfect peace. It has gone through various incarnations. Incarnations are the changes in its form, qualities and situations

according to its interests and insistence. All this is due to its insistence or will. It has the natural characteristic of assuming the form willed. The atomic consciousness, on account of its will and its instantaneous realisation became many and pervasive. All this is its own nature and form; though apparently many, it is all one in essence it has extended its own being in all possible varieties. The energy of the single atom has diversified itself into so many centres, each one with its own peculiarity and will; and hence the conflict. At any given moment, the innumerable centres will in a variety of ways; and every will comes into conflict with the rest. The inevitable result is the great struggle. Generally, the willing atom does not know the "*whither*" and "*what*" of its will. But the effect is bound to be there; The tangible result of the wills of the willing atoms is to be witnessed at the moment of the cosmic destruction when the whole universeis reduced to ashes. But, the loving wills are not cancelled altogether; the great moments of happiness in the world are the result of these wills; the characteristic of the individual energy to will is always operative. It is its essence and it owes it to the Primordial Energy. None can ever be self-conscious without this characteristic. Whoever experiences self-awareness, does so exclusively in virtue of this characteristic and of nothing else. To think oneself to be anything else is sin, is duality, is degeneration. The Primal Energy that scintillated first willed and became many will-centres. In reality it is one and homo-geneous; but appears to be heterogeneous due to ignorance. The creature thinks itself to be something different, but there is no change in the original fibre. What is different in it is only this stupid idea of difference; but it can be removed by Upāsanā and ultimately oneness is realised. It is stated above that there was no time nor space nor cause at

the moment of the first quiver in the atomic energy. But how then it comes to be that we do speak of these dimensions and concepts? The reason is this – the quivering atomic energy is designated as the Great Principle by Vedāntā. The essential characteristic of the principle is consciousness. The felt awareness expands itself into ether (Akāshā) the very next moment. It itself is the prime cause, the first moment. How can there be the consciousness of time if there is no awareness? The expanse of the ether itself is the space. Hence the three are one single Great Principle. With a single quality, this principle became space, time and cause. Next came the three Gunas and the five elements. The speed was simply immeasurable. Awareness transformed itself into ether and this in turn turned into space. The original scintillation got moving in space and that was the air. The air gathered momentum and fire came into existence. The throbbing of the fire increased and became cold and that was water. The water got cooler still and was turned into earth. All the characteristics of the previous forms are crystallised in the earth and vibrate there; In virtue of this peculiarity there come into being innumerable varieties of living beings and plants; and the original quiver pulsates in and through their vital sap.

The scintillating characteristic prior to ether is filled in every electron and proton and is constantly increasing in strength. As long as the quiver in the atoms is operative, so long the constituents must be in motion. The Prime Telos, orginal will pervedes the whole range of moving and immovable beings and is constantly active there. The poor creature thinks he can do something which may be good or bad and feels himself to be happy or miserable. But the original consciousness sees nothing excepting itself. It has no organs, yet it is in action with

innumerable organs. It is never polluted nor can it ever be. Consciousness imprisoned in the petty physical frame suffers in virtue of its own limitations. The various conscious centres hedged by the limiting adjuncts only think that they are different from the original source. But there is only one Being, one spirit, one quality, formless, partless, timeless, non spatial, overflowing with immensity, the one pure consciousness. There is no scope for difference and distinction. Everything takes place at the proper moment in accordance with the Law that binds all. But the creature, deluded by the narrow interests of I and mine, suffers pain for nothing; it is limited only to itself. But everything materialises at the proper moment. When Rāvaṇā becomes unbearable Rāma is there to give relief; When Kamsa rules supreme, Krishna is there as an antidote. This is how the rhythm of ups and downs is maintaiued. The controlling force of all these events is the same. It never changes, It cannot be that there is one God in one Age and another in a different one. But the creature thinks it otherwise. Just a single quality gives birth to the glow of the expansed universe. In the absence of that one quality, all is pure silence. When this one single quality is known and befriended, the heart mingles with the Heart, confidence becomes one with the confidante; There is that supreme sense of inelianable mutuality of oneness of quality in all and the awareness of the characteristics and adjectives as belonging to the One. The supreme Unity is realised; and hence is called the supreme self. All time, all space and all cause has become one for eternity; the one alone is all-active. It has no gain nor loss nor death. It is unborn, sui-generis, eternal, and yet is born every moment and also manifests itself in every epoch. All spiritual and intellectual knowledge comes to rest there.

THE GĀYATRĪ HYMN

The Hymn of hymns, Oh Uodhava, is the Gāyatrī Hymn. I shall explain it to thee from the beginning to end; pray hear (Ekanāthi Bhagawata. XXI-441),

The Lord says, "Oh Uddhava, Gāyatrī Hymn is the bed-rock of all hymns. All means many (This number comes to be known later) That in virtue of which this number comes to be experienced is Gāyatrī. The Trisyllabic A + U + M means Omkār—The Logos. The next step starts with two numbers. The first one is the consciousness of one's own being. It is the natural characteristic, the unuttered word. It is the unknowingly spoken word given out every where and every moment and no one knows about it, This word, uttered unawares, is the Gāyatri hymn, the basis of all hymns. Innumerable words are spoken out subsequently; and all the universes spring from them. But the Prime source of all is the Gāyatrī chhandas, the unspoken word, the unuttered sound. Everyone has the same experience. And what is the experience born of this unspoken word? One's own being! of course.

There are innumerable varieties of being from the ant to the gods, But what is the original Being? It is Gāyatri. The experience of this being is one's own being. This Gāyatri Chhandas comes first; the rest only follow. The characteristic of that being is explained by the Lord as follows:—What is the nature of that hymn? Even though there be the power to create innumerable universes, it cannot be left hold of. The original sound of the unasked for, unspoken, unthought of and unuttered word was born in the form of chakrapani; and it is unique to him. But not recognising it, the 'perfect' has come to be a deplorable creature through graded degeneration in the

course of the temporal process. The pursuit of the chhandas is facinating. For every one, it is the same awareness of being, the unspoken word, yet spoken. In spite of the efforts of the four Vedas, six Shāstrās and eighteen Pūrāṇas, its interpretation remains incomplete. Still there is the uninterrupted facination for the Gāyatri Chhandās.

Siddhi cannot be cast into the mould of our fancy. It should be in its own, pure form. Even if you were to undertake to broom the floors of some one through compassion and with sincerity, it cannot be said to be your duty or daily routine. The siddhi showered on you cannot remain as you will it to for it is not genuine. What is the central point? Gāyatri Chāṇda of coursė. What is Gāyatri Chaṇda? What does the creature know about it? It is the unuttered utterance, the spontaneous thunderlike utterance of God. The awarenes of the Self is due to it only. The great saint Tukārām says "the Vedas are angry with us, but we have their father in our hearts". There is only Gayatri Chhanda hereafter as the main stay of everything in the universe. What does Gayatri Chhandas mean? It is the awareness of your own being and of all that you can do and say and what do you make out of the hymn? It is whatever you understand without speech; and that is that. Wherever there is life, there is the hymn to support it. If the basic utterance be absent, where can the "I am" come from? It vibrates in us and that is what we know; and hence, in spite of years of miserable drugery, we cannot feel like parting with it. In virtue of this Gayatri hymn that Shri Rāma and Shri Vishnu came to this earth as incarnations; but they mastered it. What is the basis of that which gave significance to the names of Rama and Krishna and of that from whence they came

as incarnations? It is Gayatri chhandas again. This unwitting consciousness of your own being is the same as they too had of their own. But they did it consciously and experienced it as such. Other beings get to the surface of the meaning, which is only the perversion thereof. the yawning of the creatures lets out the syllables A+U+M. Can then there be any other basis for our existence? Every one wishes that his life be prolonged by a few years more. But what it? For heaven's sake meditate on the meaning you have understood as above; you yourselves are chakrapani, the being with thousand hands and heads, the unuttered sound. The word and its resounding sense are the first Person himself; and that is what he is and is experienced as such. And what is the sign of the experience? It is the complete satisfaction of the mind. Gayatri hymn is the substratum of the satisfaction of all and it bursts forth spontaneously; for the sound is ever glorious. What can be the sense of God that is void of Omkar? Even if he be born of the lineage of the Brahman what is (his) essence? It is Omkār, what could be the arrangement of the vowels? How can he be without Gayatri chhandas? It is certain that this chhandas is the meaning-interpretation of God; Why then wander about the four quarters unnecessarily?

The name that resounds in you without being uttered is your own indwelling spirit. If you were to run in the quest of something else without regard for and belief in it, would that make any sense? Even if you do not understand it, the hymns must make sense to you. You facination and love for that hymn does not loosen its grip on you. And yet for its satisfaction that you are wandering aimlessly even as the mother perhaps could, for the satisfaction of her child,

while the feeding is just near her very boosom. It is enough if you silently listen to the ten sounds, five resoundings, dual reverberation and the single voice and the symphony of them all. This basic Gāyatri hymn is with you only. (This is the process of 'Nādānusandhāna' of Rajayoga which can be achieved either by Hathayoga or even by sheer Nāmayoga).

Three groups of eight syllables make one series of twenty four sounds*.

* *Note:* Gayatri Mantra consists of twentyfour syllables as follows:—Oam, Bhooh, Oam, Bhuvah, Oam, Swaha, Oam, Mahah, Oam, Janah, Oam Tapah, Oam, Satyam, Tat, Savituih, Varenyam, Bhargah, Devasya, Dhimahi, Dhiyo, Yo, Nah, Prachodayaat.

Great Rishis and saints acquire immense power by reciting this hymn of twenty four syllables. Innumerable worlds are created and destroyed by its power. But consider the power of the bisyllabic word Rāma that easily cancels all this power and rests in perfection. "Marā" means fear; but just reverse the syllables and what a difference it makes! When the rhythm (Rama) is stopped, one is dead. But one who is mad after it, experiences the status of perfection and witnesses the disappearance of the whole universe along with its paraphernalia. He also notices that though the hymn be so immensely powerful, these two syllables (Rama) have imprisoned its cosmic power in the interior of an atom.

Vedas as basic:

They were basic to the subsequent interpretation. Hence, they are called basic. But the Primal root, first cause of every thing that is, is this hymn.

The Beatitude of Brahman, unbound. The experience of one's own being, of the vision of one's own self and the eventual peace that is unparallelled is called Brahmānanda. The experience of one's own nature without the help of others is later on interpreted as the Great Beatitude (Paramananda). One who has his own vision, attains to this beatitude.

Spiritual life: This is what the spirit and the spiritual life is: The sun is of the form of Lustre. Just as there is the lustre of lustre, so also is Gayatri Chhandas the very life of spirit. Why life? Because it is experienced as "is". Do we not experience sleep and awakening only so long as it is? If it stops there is the experience of neither. What is the meaning of the phrase "water is wet"? The same sense is to be read in "life of spirit" The Lord says, I am hidden and it is my treasure. It is because of it that I remain hidden from all. But that which hides me also reveals me. But how do I appear when seen? Surely as non-dual, non-different. He who listens to the vibrating hymn is hidden, and says that it is the root cause of all, its interpretation is trisyllabic; these are further explained in fiftytwo letters and they in turn are expounded in the Vedas. (The Trisyllabic omkar and the fiftytwo alphabets of the Devanāgāri script in their context of spotāvāda of Mīmāinsa) With the devout recilation of this hymn every thing will be distinctly clear, for it is already there. But if one wishes to realise my vision without it, he will have it; and it will be Advaita–Non-dual" (The reference is to Nāma-yoga as an easy alternative to Dhyāna or Rāja–yoga).

What is it that every one likes most? Obviously greatness! For it is the mainstay. We are not the one

among many. The honour goes to Gāyatrī hymn. It is the hymn of all hymns. One who interpretes it is not one among many, but the leader of all. Once he is seen, there is an end to all desires. But one who, regardless of all that springs forth from the recitation of the hymn, only desires to have my vision realised, will alone-have it as non-dual Jeeva, the individual soul is the experience; and that which is touched by the experinec is Shiva. These are two distinctions but one quality; and both are contained in the Gāyatrī hymn. Jeeva and Shiva are the two tasts of experience. But when they experience unity, all is peace. What do the syllables of this immovable one signify? Absolute bliss of the self, it is Sat (being), Chit (consciousness) and Ananda (beatitude). This is the essence of Gāyatri hymn. Its contemplation confers absolute bliss.

FLORAL OFFERINGS FROM NISARGADATTA

Feeding, rest and sex-life give rise to the experience of life, world and the Brahman. The path of devotion is eternal imperishable. Devotion should be practised devoutly. Spiritual knowledge should be attained with conscious efforts. That consciousness which makes us aware of knowledge should be utilised for spiritual knowledge. The world is born of our will. The awareness that is at the root of this experience is nothing but our own self. The characteristics and form of the awareness must be known.

Whatever appears is evanescent for it is not there at all. Palatial buildings and Palaces that we see today were not there before. The "perceivable" presupposes the percipient. But the percipient soul is different from the perceived. It is imperishable and formless. The "I" that is different from the "eyed" must be known directly. The individual takes the supreme soul to be an individual.

The knowledge that makes this experience possible is nothing different from the experiencing "I". But that which is prior, even to this experience is known as the supreme Soul. The awareness that makes experience possible is called knowledge.

Knowledge is God and the witness thereof is the supreme Soul.

"What do you know of God beyond the word itself"?

If you think that you are a Jñanin (ज्ञानी) now, you are utterly mistaken then; may be, you are that, but so long as you have not given up all desires, you are not a real Jnanin. All that you know is only verbal knowledge.

If you mean to talk about spiritual knowledge on the strength of the intellect, be sure, you will never gain

happiness and peace for the intellect is absolutely helpless before the Pure Spirit.

"I am luminous, I am like ether, I am formless, pure and bodiless". This should be your intense and speechless meditation every day, before going to sleep atleast. And in course of time you will certainly attain to the state. This is what your Guru says; do not forget it. Whatever you intently meditate on in the hyponoidal state you are sure to realise.

How possibly could the world go on if the spiritually enlightened were to isolate themselves from it?

There is nothing excepting the word "God"; but that should not hinder you in your firm resolve. Even if you have realised yourself, do not give up meditation or prayer or worship for knowledge devoid of devotion is colourless. Whatever the enlightened speak, they do so in a state of spiritual intoxication. Hence, they do not care for anything, even for themselves. Whatever such a soul says in the state of divine inspiration he is absolutely unaware of. Hence, he is not proud of it. He knows that whether it be Rama or Krishna or anybody else and whatever his status as a philosopher, he is after all a product of name and form.

If God were to meet only at the time of death, then all efforts are in vain.

The Guru is with you now, serve him with care.

Meditate on what you have heard and on your knowledge too. If you do not remember it then keep quiet. God intuits about himself as God what you intuit about yourself. He is aware of his godliness only as a correlate of the devotee. If the awareness in virtue of which you have this cognition (i. e. of God) is not there, who can say "this is God" then? Your awareness of yourself is the

God's awareness of his godliness. Hence, be sure that what you need, God also needs.

Keep your mind under your control, fix it firmly at the feet of the Guru and be the master of your own mind.

The awareness of your being is the treasure of the formless supreme Spirit. Whatever status you raise it to, will be yours; but not of your physical frame. When you meditate on the form of Guru, it enters into your being; In the process of this meditation the determinate form emerges from your formless being. This is what is known as the form of God. If the reference be masculine, it is Bhagwāna and if feminine, it is Bhagawati. The form of your vision, be it that of Datta or of Vishnu or of any other devinity, it springs forth only from your own formless being.

It is all sheer superstition to think that messengers of Vishnu are commissioned for escorting the meritorious and those of Yama, for the sinful at the time of death. If none has accompanied us at the time of birth it is an idle gossip to say that there would be one at the time of departure.

Your soul will manifest itself in whatever status you raise it to. Meditate on and worship your soul as the Sadguru and you are sure to attain to that status; but you are not to be identified with your body.

No devotee has ever had the experience of God or Guru asdifferent from self knowledge.

It is a matter of faith. "Faith is always fruitful". Faith is a great thing. The faith in our own being is itself the feet of guru; once you are firm in this faith of yours, visiting other gods and godesses is superfluous.

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